



Rural Development Programme for England
for rural businesses and communities in South West England

News Release

31 July, 2008

Fifteen rural areas share £33 million funding

Fifteen rural partnerships across South West England have been awarded funding from the Local Action fund for rural communities.

The groups, which submitted their strategies in May, proposed projects ranging from tackling economic decline in their areas to mitigating the effects of climate change, and from improving links between sparse rural areas and market towns to renewable energy initiatives.

Local Action is a competitive fund - part of the EU and Defra-funded Rural Development Programme (England) – for community partnerships seeking funds to bring about lasting improvements to the life and economy of their towns and villages.

“We are delighted with the outcome of this selection because the successful bids have come from right across the region – from the Isles of Scilly to Portland in the east and the Forest of Dean in the north,” said Bruce Douglas, rural operations and delivery manager at the South West Regional Development Agency, which manages the fund.

“It means that there will be some innovative and long-term plans going ahead that will benefit both local communities and the whole region. “

The bids were scrutinised by a panel drawn from RDPE partner organisations, including the Forestry Commission, Natural England and the South West RDA with the Government Office for the South West as observers.

The community partnerships had to show how their objectives and priorities fitted with the objectives of the Rural Development Programme for England and priorities for Local Action by supporting the creation of genuinely sustainable farming, forestry and food sectors, whilst also bringing wider benefits for the economy, the environment and rural communities.



European Agriculture Fund for Rural
Development: Europe investing in rural areas



“We had some excellent bids, but because the process is competitive – and the total amount sought by communities was actually twice the amount in the fund – not everyone got all the money they requested. However, successful groups have been awarded significant sums which should make a real difference to their areas. ”

Next steps will see the South West RDA issue contracts to the Local Action Groups which will then get on with the job of detailed planning and implementation of the projects from the autumn onwards.

All funding from the South West Local Action fund for rural communities has now been allocated. Information about Local Action and the bids is available on the RDA website at www.southwestrda.org.uk

Details of the Local Action Groups and their funding:

1. Local Action Groups funded from RDPE funds ring-fenced for the Convergence area (Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly)

Clay Country	£1,800,000	Contact: Jess Pytel, Restormel Borough Council, 01726 223546
East Cornwall Local Action Group	£1,800,000	Catherine Smith, , Bodmin, 01208 265706
West Cornwall Together	£1,800,000	Charlotte Hill, Pool, 01209 614901
Isles of Scilly Local Action Group	£2,250,000	Aisling Hick, Council of the Isles of Scilly, 01720 424312

2. Local Action Groups in the Competitiveness area (outside Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly)

South Devon Coastal Local Action Group	£1,800,000	Alan Stapleton, Salcombe, 01548 843085
Greater Dartmoor Local Action Group	£1,800,000	Tim Beavon, West Devon Borough Council, 01822 813697
Forest of Dean Local Strategic Partnership	£2,600,000	Carolyn Mitchell, Forest of Dean District Council, 01594 812609
Salisbury Plain Local Action Group	£2,500,000	John Dowsett, Community First, Devizes, 01380 722475
Western Somerset Local Action Group	£2,250,000	Corinne Matthews, Economy and Europe, Rural Delivery Team, County Hall, Taunton, 01823 355051

Blackdown Hills and East Devon Local Action Group	£2,400,000	Paul Diviani, Honiton, 01404 861616
Leader 4 Torridge and North Devon	£3,800,000	Jenny Carey-Wood, North Devon and Exmoor Regeneration Company, 01984 629011
Somerset Levels and Moors Local Action Group	£1,800,000	Alex Sherman, Somerset Levels & Moors LEADER+, 01458 251309
Sowing SEEDS (North Dorset/South Wilts)	£3,100,000	Hilary Ritchie, North Dorset District Council, 01258 484005
Chalk and Cheese (South and West Dorset)	£2,850,000	Sarah Watson, Stinsford Business Centre, Stinsford, Dorchester, 01305 215227
North Wessex Downs	£500,000	Fiona Newcombe, 07766 422059

For further information please contact : the Local Action Groups at the telephone numbers

